



**City of Kingston
Conservation Advisory Council
420 Broadway
Kingston, NY 12401
(845) 331-1682 x. 7339**

**Monthly Meeting Minutes
City Hall Conference Room 1
May 12, 2010**

Roll Call: 6:40 pm

In attendance:

Board Members:

Julie Noble
Judith Deming
Felipa Gaudet
Valeria Gheorghiu
Elizabeth Higgins
Gregg Swanzey
Allison Taylor

Guests:

Casey Schwartz
Sophie Dolamore
Steve Johnson – planning board
Hayes Clement – Alderman Ward 9
Tom Hoffay – Alderman Ward 2
Bill Moore
Bob Senor

Public Comment

There was no public comment

Approval of Minutes

Approval March 24 Special Meeting minutes. April Monthly meeting minutes- Gregg made a motion to make change to minutes. All in favor.

Old Business

1. Recommendations for Cat Legislation (35 min)
 - a. Judith researched the issue Bob Senor had described and learned that the issue appeared to be a dispute between neighbors. From her research, she learned that a law would not likely be effective, as it would be very difficult to enforce. The issue would be best suited by mediation or addressing it with current animal nuisance legislation.
 - b. Julie cited the statistics regarding feral and outdoor cats killing birds and other small mammals. She shared the brochure, “Cats, Birds and You” with the group. She shared the following recommendations:
 - i. All domestic animals would be spayed and neutered.
 - ii. All domesticated cats would be licensed and collared.
 - iii. Feeding of cats and dogs that are outside would be prohibited.
 - iv. Stray cats found without a collar would be reported to the dog warden.
 - v. The number of cats that could be legally licensed would be limited to three to five cats.

- c. Valeria shared concerns about the capacity of shelters and possible euthanasia of cats. Also, she shared concerns that many cats do not keep collars on their necks.
- d. Judith shared concerns that it may not be safe for cats to wear collars, as they could get caught on structures and the cats' lives may be endangered. She also shared concerns that euthanasia of feral cats may occur if these recommendations were adopted, as feral cats often cannot be adopted. She also shared concerns that the current legislation regarding dogs is enforceable as well.
- e. Concerns were shared about Kingston's public image if such regulations were adopted.
- f. Liz suggested a program that could raise community members' awareness about the negative effects of feeding feral cats and alternatives to doing so.
- g. Felipa felt that education would be more effective than fines and echoed concerns about enforcement.
- h. Judith shared that Marie Post expressed a need for help with community education and enforcement.
- i. Liz shared studies that domestic cats kill more birds and small mammals than feral cats.
- j. Valeria shared support for spaying and neutering legislation.
- k. Sophie shared that her cat needs to go outside and takes his collar off as well.
- l. Bill shared support for permanent identification system for cats. He also shared the history regarding dog licensing. It was regulated by Agriculture and Markets, due to their past relationship with humans. He shared the problem with spaying and neutering feral cats, which are then unable to be adopted. He believed that feral cats should be euthanized.
- m. Valeria and Judith shared concerns that feral cats could be killed.
- n. Hayes Clement shared that since dogs are not limited in number, quantities of cats should not be as well. He recommended that along with our recommendation to not limit the number of cats, we should cite examples of other municipalities' legislation regarding limiting the number of cats, which was not upheld by courts.
- o. Tom Hoffay shared that Kingston's neighborhoods differ greatly and this issue is most likely a problem in more dense communities. He recommended keeping the legislation as simple as possible to meet the needs of all neighborhoods. He shared concerns about euthanasia.
- p. The group agreed to recommend the following:
 - i. No limitations on the number of cats.
 - ii. Mandatory spaying and neutering of outdoor cats.
 - iii. Some form of identification required: following New Paltz's identification possibilities.
 - iv. Look into the dog licensing with the dog warden. Is it enforced/enforceable? What is being done regarding public education?
 - v. The CAC members will look into Kingston's nuisance law and other municipalities' laws regarding feeding cats outdoors before making any recommendations on this issue.
- q. Concern was shared that more information would be needed before the CAC could provide the Common Council with recommendations for cat legislation.
- r. Recommendations will be for Bob Senor and his neighbor to pursue mediation regarding the specific situation in his neighborhood. If we cannot solidify our recommendations prior to the Common Council's

2. Climate Smart Pledge (15 min)

- a. Focus group feedback
 - i. Bard students had their final presentations regarding our focus groups. Julie, Gregg and Judith were in attendance. The presentations were impressive and contained very important Presentations for three groups (Renewable Energy, Solid Waste, and Preparing for Climate Change) are occurring tomorrow between 4:30 and 6:00 at Bard. We will need to review their data and projects and give feedback to Jennifer Schwartz for our needs for the pledge, so she can tailor her summer course projects to meet our needs.

- ii. Valeria sent e-mail and went to the Worker's Rights Law Center Community forum and met people who expressed interest in our next meeting.
 - iii. Judith shared about the Bard students' projects, expressing that they were very impressive and the information will greatly help the CAC with the pledge.
 - iv. Julie received e-mail from Emilie Hauser regarding _____.
 - v. Gregg's group was land use. He was very impressed by the Bard students' process and projects. He met with those involved with Complete Streets, a group that has similar goals.
 - vi. Jennifer Schwartz mentioned that Ning site will no longer be free as of July. She suggested handing it over to the CAC. We will look into the cost, the benefits and other alternatives.
 - vii. Alison shared the value of the NING site, as the students posted links to pertinent information.
 - viii. Felipa shared Jennifer Schwartz's comments on the notes from the Preparing for Climate Change group and Emilie Hauser's feedback. She also requested an e-mail address correction for one of the members in that group.
 - ix. Valeria shared about her contacts with the Workforce Development Institute. Also, she spoke with Victor Melendez from Clearwater regarding storm water issues, including rain gardens, trees that would absorb more water, etc., all of which may help create green jobs.
- b. Next steps: public meeting, Climate Analyst
- i. The city cannot advertise the position until the grant money has been received for the position.
 - ii. Kingston is one of three municipalities that will receive funding for a climate analyst position. The other two communities are Red Hook and Hudson. Uncertainty existed regarding whether the position would be a civil service position or an independent contractor position. Sustainable Hudson may be involved in this process. On Thursday, May 20 from 6-8 at Sustainable Hudson's office, there will be a meeting with CAC and/or governmental members from the three municipalities who will be receiving the grant money.
 - iii. The question was raised about whether or not to include this semester's Bard students within future communications. The students will be given the option of continuing to receive our e-mails or being taken off our list.
 - iv. All CAC members will send our notes from the 4-8-10 pledge meeting to Julie and she will send those notes to the entire pledge group, as well as information regarding a plan for a future meeting.
 - v. Jennifer Schwartz will attend our June 9th meeting to share with the CAC what was done by the Bard students.
 - vi. Discussion about content of next meeting. Valeria suggested sharing overview of pledge and what has happened so far. What would be valuable for the Bard students to do for us? Encourage people to invite more participants. Julie will send two Doodle polls: one for the planning meeting and one for the Public Visioning Meeting. At June meeting, task force should be formed so we should define the role of the task force. Valeria suggested a short application that could be completed during the meeting. Felipa suggested that we express that applicants do not need to be experts in these fields. Judith suggested that we include a short explanation of the task force.
3. Whitney, Valeria's intern, created an educational brochure, *Kingston's Backyard Barnyard*. Allison read the brochure and shared it with others and it was well received. Suggestions for changes will be given to Whitney and Valeria. Liz suggested contacting Annie Mardinay from the 4H with our pamphlet to get more feedback. Allison suggested referring people to the Hurley Vet for more information, as they treat exotic and barnyard animals.

New Business

1. Modification to Rules and Procedures regarding filling vacancies.
 - a. Julie shared that our current rules state that we review applications in September for recommendation by the mayor in January.
 - b. Liz suggested that we solicit applications twice per year.
 - c. Gregg shared the concern that reviewing applications takes a certain amount of time and could impact the overall length of our meetings.
 - d. Felipa shared concern that our CAC's capacity to do the work that is needed is impacted by having fewer members. She felt that having reviewing applications a few times per year would enable the CAC to do more. She also suggested having a separate, more flexible policy for student members, as their academic calendars are more time dependent.
 - e. Gregg and Liz shared concerns that an application process one time per year can be a more thoughtful and intentional process, rather than filling gaps.
 - f. Judith shared concern that we may not solicit the applications until the one deadline per year.
 - g. Bill suggested changing the bylaws to give more time flexibility for student members.
 - h. Sophie shared that if we wait until January, she would only have a few months on the CAC.
 - i. Liz and Valeria suggested students could be recruited in March to serve beginning in September.
 - j. Felipa shared concerns that the September induction time frame would lessen the amount of time students could serve and it would not enable students to cite their experience on the CAC on their college applications.
 - k. Discussion about whether a student member would be a ninth member with full voting rights or a tenth honorary member.
 - l. Sophie shared that Youth Leadership Council taught their participants that when a person is sixteen years of age, they had the right to serve as voting members on boards. She felt that voting rights were important for student members.
 - m. Julie read suggested changes to the CAC bylaws concerning student members, which stated _____.
 - n. Valeria made a motion to accept changes in rules and procedures. All in favor.
 - o. Julie made a motion to accept Sophie Judith second All in favor.
 - p. Sophie shared that there may be future interested students from the Youth Leadership Council.

Valeria made a motion to table the Announcements/Communications and Reports section of our agenda until our next meeting. All in favor.

Valeria shared information about City Garden Coalition meeting on May 20, 2010.

Gregg made a motion to adjourn.

2. Scope for letters of support (15 min)

Adjournment: 9:04 pm